# SIX
# SERMONICLES,
## OR
# DISCOURSES
## ON THE
# Puniſhment of EVE.

SISTER
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# SIX SERMONICLES, OR DISCOURSES ON THE Puniſhment of EVE.

ATTEMPTED BY

THE AUTHORESS OF

*Letters on the Antediluvian Females.*

+ Lucy Rudd

EN DROIT DEVANT.

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*KENDAL:*

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JUN

Candid Reader,

*HAVING formerly wrote* NINETEEN LETTERS ON THE ANTEDILUVIAN LADIES *(which happened to pleaſe ſome particular friends) I then made a promiſe of attempting this work. If you aſk why I dont affix my name, I anſwer, it would be of no ſervice to you, whilſt it is an advantage to me. If you like it, you are kindly welcome. If your feelings ſympathize not with mine, I am ſafe from the attack of criticiſm. Was I indeed poſſeſſed of thoſe accompliſhments which I every day behold in others,*

*I would*

*I would boldly appear the* harper *of my own melody: but conſcious of the* poverty *of my merit, what I have tried in my obſcure retreat to think for myſelf, muſt only thus be communicated to others, by an unknown*

SISTER.

WESTMORLAND,
January 9*th*, 1788.

THE

## THE FIRST.

### GENESIS iii, 16.

*I will greatly multiply thy ſorrow and thy conception: in ſorrow thou ſhalt bring forth children; thy deſire ſhall be to thy huſband, and he ſhall rule over thee.*

UNTO the woman this was announced, the firſt of our ſex, the only female then exiſting. —Unto *the* woman, for whom all nature ſeemed to blow, and who at that period, bore equal ſway with her huſband over the animal creation. Do I ſay huſband? that word

now conveys an idea of power, of lordſhip; but then, difference there was none, 'twas ſin firſt made it; Adam was then Eve's partner in the ſmiling pleaſures of Eden. If rural ſcenes ſtill pleaſe our fancy, when the harrowed earth is grown old and leſs fertile; how charming the garden of Paradiſe, where no boiſterous ſtorm made havock, no fear or apprehenſion diſturbed the peaceful boſom; when nature had not yet felt any violent ſhocks, nor one animal learned to prey upon another. No doubt, my ſiſters, our mother was as happy as her ſituation would allow: I look back to that period with praiſe to the ſupreme Architect, and without the leaſt emotion of reſentment towards her, for entailing ſo many evils upon me.—

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The

The woman who heſitates, is loſt. She liſtened, ſhe looked, ſhe eat, ſhe fell; and let us pity her miſfortune, whilſt we dare to cenſure her miſconduct.

There are infidels who laugh at the narrative of the fall, and rank it amongſt the agreeable fictions of poetry. Laugh on! I too exerciſe my reaſon, but cannot ſee the joke, nor diſcern why I ſhould deny the fact. Such puny adverſaries, who only wage war with effrontery, from my ſoul I deſpiſe; and it hurts my honour, that St. Paul ſhould ſay, they are able to deceive ſilly women and children. Children they may; then give yours, my ſiſters, better education, and teach them early to defend their faith.

Do you in every review of antiquity, entirely abſtract your thoughts from preſent cuſtoms and faſhions? Would you, for inſtance, really be acquainted with a Grecian dame, or a Roman matron? London or Paris can give you no aſſiſtance. Whatever you ſee in either of theſe great cities, will only confound your ideas, and lead you wrong. Reflect upon the age of the world, the origin of arts and ſciences, of decorations and ornaments; you will carry yourſelf back to that ſimplicity which reigned in the beginning of time. You will then conſider Eve as you ought. The fig-leaf and the apple will appear of conſequence. You will no longer deſpiſe the one as a covering, nor wonder at the influence of the other.

He

He who more than two thouſand years after, wove the ſtory of Atalanta, might as well have dropped a golden egg, a peach, a pear, but again he trumped up the old affront; again, by a gold ſtreaked apple, woman was deceived. If this was not from old tradition, the poets thought at leaſt ſuch temptation probably would ſucceed. There is no end to the cavils and objections of bad hearts.

Through the whole temptation of our great grandfather and mother, in prohibiting the tree of knowledge, there is not any thing ſo puerile and trifling, as is pretended. What did the great Creator do more than put a bar to exclude that evil his wiſdom knew the bane of their happineſs?

They were created free, to act as they pleaſed; and if they fell, the fault was their own: they knew the conſequence. Eve could not be tempted by a more ſpecious lure. Eve had the power to withſtand: ſhe did not uſe that power.

All objections to this part of the Moſaical Hiſtory ariſe from ſelf conceit, from diſtruſt in Gŏd, from a fear that the Bible ſhould be true. Then throw it nobly away; and with the Spaniſh King declare, That if God had conſulted you, you could have made a better world. The truly knowing think otherwiſe, and find every thing therein is good. My blood runs chill at ſuch horrid blaſphemy: but nibbling treacherous ſceptics are even worſe than this.

I would

I would defend the meek and humble Moſes; and though his writings have expoſed our weakneſs, laid our honour in the duſt, and cut ſhort our days on earth; yet can I find no better account, none ſo well ſupported by internal, by external evidences.

Thus have I, in the language of my elder brethren, premiſed ſomething or nothing to my purpoſe.— I will, for memory's ſake, repeat to you the words of my text. *I will greatly multiply thy ſorrow and thy conception: in ſorrow thou ſhalt bring forth children; thy deſire ſhall be to thy huſband, and he ſhall rule over thee.*

Unhappy mother! and thus art

thou fallen, fallen from thy high eſtate, to weep with ſorrow, to bear another's rule, his caprice, his petulence, and yet not forbear to love, to doat upon him. Well may each of thy long line of daughters ſhed a tear to thy memory; many they will ſhed at the thought of their own ſufferings, whilſt they anticipate the hour of their dreadful pangs. Here is a field to dwell on woe; and to dwell on woe is a pleaſing pain. This, however, we ought not to do; rather let me vindicate the ſentence of the Almighty, and kiſs the rod which chaſtiſes me. Let us be reſigned; yet, think and act with fortitude. He who hath juſtly condemned us, hath ſhewn mercy in judgment. The more violent our throes, the ſhorter our miſery: and

an

an infant born (unaccountable on any other reaſon but the ordination of Providence) we forget the paſt. Some think not at all about the matter. One of theſe we have obſerved. For nine eaſy labours, ſhe thought ſhe was exempt from the general curſe; but felt it all in the tenth, and ſunk, and died. Thou, my God, knoweſt how different my heart. In the time of peril I have put my truſt in thee, from thee alone have ſought deliverence.

My intention, dear ſiſters, is to edify both you and myſelf, with a minute conſideration of the particulars which may be obſerved in the ſentence pronounced on Eve, *viz.*

A painful

A painful conception,
A laborious delivery,
A violent affection for Adam, and
An implicit ſubmiſſion to his temper.

Theſe, no doubt, afford many inferences very inſtructive; but as we are much intereſted in the hiſtory of the firſt woman, it will be neceſſary to acquire right notions of her conduct; and firſt of all to trace out ſome circumſtances, which lead to the fate ſhe met with.

Suffer me to do this.

Adam and his ſpouſe were created on the ſixth day. He from mould or red earth; ſhe from a better digeſted matter; one reaſon of her having a more delicate conſtitution.

She

She was taken from his ſide, moſt probably to point to them their cloſe affinity.

As Adam, during the act of her creation, lay in a deep ſleep, there is great room to ſuppoſe, that ſhe was kept apart from him for a few days. It was natural for Moſes to have ſaid, that when he awoke, he found, to his ſurpriſe, a creature of the ſame ſhape and likeneſs. But remark! He gives us another idea, and tells us expreſly, that "the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought *her* unto the man."

The firſt efforts of thoſe truly auguſt perſons, would be to look around them, to try the power of their

their limbs, to ſtand, to walk, run, to lie down. A few hours after they would be fatigued, and fall aſleep. Awaking from thence, appetite would ſtimulate, and the angel of inſtinct point to them the means of ſatisfying their hunger and thirſt. Further, they were contemplative beings, and their religion was to praiſe and adore their Creator. In this they might be aſſiſted, too, by the inſtruction of ſuperior intelligences. To be ſhort, they would quickly acquire a few ideas, ſufficient for the preſent; and during this acquiſition, Adam would perceive that each animal was happy in a mate, whilſt he himſelf walked ſingle: the thoughts of Eve would be nearly the ſame. Before their union, ſociable, endearing pleaſure was wanting, and the

the want felt by both. It was not good for man to be alone.

How pretty the fancy of Milton, when he makes the woman court her ſhadow in the ſmooth ſurface of the lake, until a voice thus warned her.

" What thou ſeeſt, fair creature, is thyſelf,
With thee it comes and goes; but follow me,
And I will bring thee where no ſhadow ſtays
Thy coming, and thy ſoft embraces. He
Whoſe image thou art, thou ſhalt enjoy
Inſeperably thine."

The hour now arrived when Adam received the gracious preſent.—I do not know any thing that militates againſt this idea of their being kept ſeparate, except that it allows not the grand bleſſing and prohibition,

to

to have been delivered in Eve's preſence, at leaſt on the ſixth day: but whether the bleſſing and prohibition were delivered to Adam alone (and by him afterwards communicated to her) or in the preſence of them both, it is ſufficient that ſhe knew the conditions: and this we find from part of her diſcourſe with the ſerpent. "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden: of the tree which is in the midſt of the garden ye ſhall not eat, ye ſhall not touch it, leſt ye die." *

Some Divines will not allow that Adam led his blooming bride to the nuptial bower. This, ſay they, is too carnal for Eden: certain pleaſures

* See Geneſis i, 28. alſo ii, 15, 16.

ſures in Eden had no exiſtence; but why, good ſirs, the reſtriction? Are you afraid of Cain's being conceived without ſin? You need not. He was born, nay begotten on the curſed earth. Do you make the pleaſures of love incompatible with innocence? Away with ſuch ideas to monaſtic haunts, where firſt imagined. Nothing was ever baſe in man, but the abuſe of bleſſings, or the diſobedient choice of ſomething evidently forbidden. Man was created man, and woman had her paſſions; the paſſions only of that nature created by the God of purity. When God had finiſhed all things, did he not rejoice in his works, declaring every thing to be good? Did he not then ſend forth his command to encreaſe and multiply? And what but an innocent offspring?

offspring? Did not Adam before the fall, receive this intelligence, * "therefore ſhall a man leave his father and his mother, and cleave unto his wife?" Once more, I aſk, if ſin had not brought forth luſt, how were we to have been produced? Or was the whole world only to have been inhabited by two perſons? Did not the ſame all-wiſe Being make the more uncomely parts of the human ſtructure, who made the beautiful and majeſtic features? Nay, how could the relative terms, pure and impure, exiſt in Paradiſe? In that age of things, there was no unclean beaſt to form a diſtinction. I conclude, that our firſt parents there conſummated

* Dr. Wells, in his Covenants, notes this as one of the commands given before the fall.

conſummated their nuptials, that the heavenly choir ſung their epithalamium. Alas, the heavenly choir knew not that this happy pair would ſoon, ah! ſoon indeed, abuſe the freedom of their will: this was a ſecret in the breaſt of the omnipotent.

It will be ſeen hereafter, why this peculiar circumſtance is ſo much inſiſted upon. At preſent, to be conformable to the mode of diſcourſe, I wrap up with a moral inference.

From what hath been advanced, it plainly appears, that our ſex is of the utmoſt conſequence in the ſcale of creation. We are not merely capable of being happy ourſelves,

by our connection with man, but of communicating happineſs to him; nay, to redouble it by mutual enjoyment.—We know he is fond of us, and if we cannot always model him as we pleaſe, yet by uſing proper means and tenderneſs, by bearing and forbearing, we ſhall ſoften his rugged diſpoſition, and retain his affection.—It has been ſaid that we are ſtronger than he: this muſt be meant of our *influence*, by which, rather than ſtrength, we are able to carry our point.—This is of God, and happy for us: had we been made of equal ſtrength, then in our domeſtic broils, we might have fought it out; and the ſtruggle have continued hereditary.

In Eve's firſt attempt on Adam, ſhe

ſhe perſuaded, ſhe prevailed. What can reſiſt gentle looks and kind perſuaſion!—It may be theſe are our arms, and with theſe we conquer. —Yet be it confeſſed, theſe we too often turn againſt ourſelves, and in the pleaſure of our conqueſt, meet our ruin.

If vigilance was ever preached to man, again and again be it preached to woman. Where are we ſecure from harm? Where ſhall we walk, and not a thouſand ills ſurround us? Serpents we may avoid, but ſiniſter deſigns upon our honour, how detect? When turbulent paſſions rebel within us, our own breaſts deceive. When our fellow creatures (who neigh by troops in the houſes of harlots, of harlots which they them-

ſelves have corrupted) are continually ſeeking our ruin, though made to protect and ſupport us, to whom ſhall we fly for ſuccour? Call in, my ſiſters, the aid of religion.— Conform not to the follies of the world. Diſciple yourſelves in the art of prudence; this will ſhew you how far to agree with faſhion, when to recede from it. In ſhort, if I may be allowed to beg, to ſupplicate, it ſhall be, that you will duly watch, for ye know not the day nor the hour when the ſweet bridegroom of your ſouls will come. *Amen.*

THE

## THE SECOND.

### GENESIS iii, 16.

*I will greatly multiply thy ſorrow and thy conception: in ſorrow thou ſhalt bring forth children; thy deſire ſhall be to thy huſband, and he ſhall rule over thee.*

THE misfortune of our mother Eve has been a topic of diſcourſe through all ages.—Too much has been at one time perhaps imputed to original ſin; too little at another. A medium is the point the neareſt to the truth: but what have I to do with this myſterious

theme, which ſo long has perplexed the Philoſopher and the Divine? Say it was the will of God, and have done with controverſy. The pin has pricked me; I feel the pain. Why ſhould I rack my head to know what pain is; The fulleſt diſcovery will not abate one degree of its intenſeneſs. Let me purſue my deſign of conſidering ſome few circumſtances prior to the fatal lapſe. In tracing the minute particulars which lead to it, more light may probably be thrown upon this intereſting ſubject.

The great end of reading hiſtory, is the advantage ariſing to us from a reflected view of good or bad example. To read for amuſement, affords the pleaſure of an hour: to read

read for moral inſtruction, how to guide our footſteps through the path of life. This is of laſting uſe: we learn what dangers to avoid, and how to act in ſimilar caſes. Yet where can there be a caſe ſimilar to that of Eve? I imagine it to happen every day, with this difference, that her fault brought ſin into the world, ours continue it: the like proceſs of the underſtanding and the affections, are viſible in both. She could not plead ignorance more than we. Recent from the hand of her Maker, ſhe voluntarily diſobeyed his poſitive command.

The circumſtances touched upon in my laſt, were ſupported by ſacred authority; even the marriage conſummation, preſumed on high pro-

bability. If more reaſons be wanted, they are theſe. God created two perſons of material ſubſtance, and after he had made Paradiſe for their reception, and ſaw that every thing was good, he bleſſed every thing. They had ſenſibility, affection, paſſion, becauſe they had the ſame inlets with us to knowledge, to love, to averſion; many people have been fond of imagining Adam and Eve more perfect and more wiſe, than on ſecond thoughts need be allowed: ſome have repreſented them too much the reverſe. Whatever might be their capacities, or their revealed knowledge, little wiſdom appears in what we have recorded of them; and it muſt be confeſſed, that we behold them thinking and reaſoning in a weaker manner than we might

expect

expect from ſuch beautiful creatures, favoured with heavenly inſtruction. They ſeem to have had every thing of human nature about them, juſt as we have, ſave that they were ſuperior to us in a due regulation of their appetites, which was not indeed their own virtue, but the act of a divine power, ſo long as they obeyed God. In ſhort, if the world made for them muſt be peopled at all with inhabitants, what was there to oppoſe a junction, ſo agreeable to the nature of bodies, made by him.

Our Saviour has acquainted us, that the inſtitution of marriage will have no place in his kingdom. His will be done: yet the bringing the firſt pair together was the cauſe of their becoming one fleſh, of their propagating

propagating a ſucceſſion of the human race. There could be no impurity in Paradiſe, becauſe there was no moral evil; hence their innocence ſhielded and ſanctified their nakedneſs; covered them, as it were, in God's preſence. Avaunt, the ſenſualiſt! whilſt I ſpeak of what has no intrinſic turpitude, till unhallowed by ſin, till poſſeſſed contrary to the ſupreme intention.

———"On ſhe came," my ſiſters,
"Led by her heavenly maker (tho' unſeen)
And guided by his voice; not uninformed
Of nuptial ſanctity and marriage rites.
Grace was in all her ſteps, heav'n in her eye,
In every geſture, dignity and love."

Such was the firſt bride; a fit paramour for man. I could dwell for ever on their happineſs; but

forgive

forgive me, if I have ſpent too much time in conſecrating that ſtate which libertines abuſe, and none but fools deſpiſe. I would get forward with my ſubject, did not impertinents hinder me at every ſtep.

Do you, good ſiſters, admit that monſter luſt in Eden's happy bower? Defend my honour; my delicacy I will defend. Little ſouls diſtinguiſh poorly. God gave to man the bleſſed boon of love; 'twas man himſelf who changed it into luſt. Some affirm that theſe two paſſions are the ſame: I am convinced to the contrary.—The one is an impulſe of body, rapidly driving on the tide of life: the other originates in mind, begets a ſympathy of affections, delights in the enjoyment of pleaſing perceptions,

perceptions, delicate ſenſations; love aſks no indulgence, which honour or virtue cannot grant; preſerves a happy rectitude of liberty, a due ſubordination of appetite: it has indeed its uneaſineſs, but that very uneaſineſs yields more of pleaſure than of pain. Love would not hurt the object of its affection; would not ſurpaſs the limits of law, of prudence. In ſucceſsful love, all is calm and peaceful, like ſeas which know no ſtorm.—Not ſo foul luſt, neceſſary indeed to animal life, and a gift alſo, which the poor brutes fully enjoy: foul in rational creatures, debaſing human nature, and ſinking it below the link in that chain where placed by providence. High advanced in the ſcale of being, why do not human creatures ſtrive

yet

yet more to exalt themſelves? God is pure; no impure thought can unhallow the manſions of the bleſſed. What ideas, then, of divinity, had they formerly, who could make their Jove deſcend to Europa? or what low conceptions have they now, whoſe heaven conſiſts in ſhady bowers, delicious walks, and warbling notes? But I have digreſſed.

Eve was the only bride who experienced love in true ſimplicity.—'Twas afterwards that ſhe felt thoſe reſtleſs emotions, we ſtill even bluſh to feel. Their eſpouſals over, the happy couple lived to God; they lived to themſelves; and long, if not for ever, they might thus have continued, had not the abundant enjoyment of every lawful gratification,

fication gradually weakened their fortitude, and rendered them a more eaſy prey to the wiles of their cunning adverſary. They had a powerful one indeed to withſtand. He reconnoitered his ground; he ſaw them both, yet durſt not venture to aſſault the man: luckily he found the woman alone, gazing with wiſtful eye on the forbidden fruit. Some time had paſſed ſince their marriage: her deſires were ſtronger than ordinary. The arch fiend ſaw the favourable opportunity; attacked by ſtratagem, and ſucceeded. The fatal apple would ſcarcely have been lure enough at any other period but then; Oh then, it was good for food, delightful to the eyes. Then the Almighty's threatening was not ſo much forgot, as by her yielding

foul

ſoul prevaricated. She taſted what ſhe longed for; and we, my ſex, are living monuments of her fall.

Whoever will conſider the chain of circumſtances which muſt inevitably have occurred prior to this event, will eaſily perceive that the lapſe was not ſudden, thoughtleſs, or raſh. Her conduct appears to have become gradually wrong. It could not be the ſhort tranſaction of an accidental meeting. She had wavered, had heſitated long before; and was more than half ready to pluck the lure; when the demon reconciled her to herſelf.

Her whole converſation with that bad ſpirit who tempted her, as well as her conduct towards her huſband, in

in not telling him of the interview with the ſerpent, is proof ſufficient to me, that ſhe fell juſt as all her daughters ſince have fallen, through diſobedience to the command of the Supreme Being: but ſhe more inexcuſable, as almoſt in the very preſence of the Almighty, and only expoſed to one ſingle probability of erring; whilſt they are ſurrounded by thouſands, of a more intricate kind, not ſo eaſily underſtood. Simple diſobedience might have terminated with one individual fault; why not die myſelf, and ſuffer Adam to be bleſſed in his God. His God might raiſe him another helpmate more worthy than me. I perceive the change in my whole body, am aſhamed of that knowledge which diſcovers to me my new ſituation.

Why

Why court then my huſband, to ruin him, to make him partaker of my guilt? The young ſinner acted like a veteran in wickedneſs; and as the ſerpent had beguiled her, ſo ſhe beguiled her huſband; and what Satan durſt not do, ſhe effected. Soon the poiſon operated, and the eyes of both were opened; not opened, probably, in a literal ſenſe, but they were as perſons intoxicated. Love, at that inſtant, degenerated into luſt; every pure and delicate idea vaniſhed immediately, and they were agitated with paſſions unknown before; they knew they were naked. By and by, a conſciouſneſs of tranſgreſſing the command, tortured their unhappy breaſts, when they heard the call, —Adam! where art thou?—Fancy

cannot paint their deſerved wretchedneſs. Sin is never without excuſe: they excuſe themſelves; they blame a third. You, my ſiſters, know the reſult: immutable juſtice condemned them.

If Eve was with child at that juncture, the embrio trembled in the womb, and periſhed. Earth too, and nature felt the ſhock, and ſtill continue to feel it.

What, my ſiſters, are we to infer from the hiſtorical account I have juſt conſidered? Many things worthy of obſervation croud upon me: a few I will offer for our preſent edification.

Anthony gave up the world for Cleopatra:

Cleopatra: Eve loſt Paradiſe for an apple. We are as eaſily to be won with a trifle, as a greater matter. It is not the greatneſs of the object which attracts human nature, ſo much as our reſolute wills, our inflamed paſſions; and therefore we are to watch the firſt beginnings, never, never to love any thing on earth too vehemently. It is inexcuſable to ſet light by the threatenings of Almighty God. The greater crimes of murder, adultery, and the like, ſtartle the ſoul at the firſt ſuggeſtion; we are drawn to them by a chain of other vices: but we always begin our misfortunes, by ſubmitting too eaſily to the ſolicitations of our ſenſes; nor do we conſider our actions as they are, or will be, with reſpect to God, our neighbour,

or ourſelves; as they ſtand with reſpect to the paſt, the preſent, and the future. 'Tis good to be content with ordinary bleſſings; not to be ſo, creates a coveting of an evil tendency.

I cannot ſay that Eve's curioſity was her ſole fault: the world has cenſured her for it; but where's the proof? It rather was appetite, 'twas diſobedience: had ſhe not the apprehenſion of every thing ſhe wanted? When we are incited by the ſenſes, knowledge is out of the queſtion. We do not chuſe to know: we would rather be blind, and ſatisfy the impulſe. The pleaſures of ſenſation are too generally ſnatched and enjoyed, without the leaſt idea to the conſequence. At length dear bought

experience ſhews the miſery they produce; but alas, that knowledge comes too late, and we are left to behold our wretchedneſs, our nakedneſs.

My young ſiſters, regard, I beſeech you, the Apoſtle, who exhorts you to be wary; touch not, taſte not, leſt you fatally find yourſelves undone, deceived, ruined; leſt you perceive, that the fleſh and the devil have prevailed, and even the laughing world is become your enemy. But let the world laugh on; *ye* are bought with a price; the ſervants of Chriſt, be ye faithful, and the joys of Heaven will be the joys of my dear ſiſters. That it may! *Amen.*

## THE THIRD.

### GENESIS iii, 16.

*I will greatly multiply thy ſorrow and thy conception: in ſorrow thou ſhalt bring forth children; thy deſire ſhall be to thy huſband, and he ſhall rule over thee.*

MANY Divines have ſo exalted the ſtate of our parents in Eden, that they have loſt ſight of human nature; and, inſtead of placing them in a link of the chain, betwixt angels and brutes, have made them equal to the former. No doubt, they were far more happy

than we. The time was truly golden, when compared with any future one: yet we muſt not forget they were mortal, formed of common earth, and afterwards placed in the garden. Whatever was formed of earth, muſt be ſubject to the laws of matter; and therefore, however beautiful their frame, however vigorous their conſtitution, nothing could prevent diſſolution after a certain length of time, but the will of God. It ſeems, the will of the Almighty would have prevented it during their obedience, and that the tree of life was to be by an eternal decree, the inſtrumental means of reſtoration.

I cannot conceive, but that during Eve's innocence, any ſlight hurt, fall, or

or bruiſe, would give her the ſenſation we feel, pain. Had not the earth its law of gravity? Would not a ſtone, thrown into the air, fall down? or a bough from a tree? or were they liable to no accident, penetrable by no foreign object, then they could not be man, adamah, or red earth. But granting it, whatever befel them, they had only to apply the univerſal Panacea, and health or renovation returned immediately.

We do not know that any tree could have this ſalutary effect; but this we know, as there was on the one hand a poſitive command not to be infringed; ſo there might be a miraculous medicine on the other, to ſerve all the purpoſes of life.

Permit

Permit me to give you my creed concerning theſe two auguſt perſonages. I believe they were created in a high degree of perfection, both as to body and mind: that they were free from the vapours and diſturbances of inferior paſſions; and "that their wills were ductile and pliant to right reaſon." As their minds were imprinted with few ideas, and thoſe very ſimple and compounded, I believe they were entirely innocent, nor did one thought verge towards moral turpitude. They were naked; ſo are we all of us born: innocence kept them blind with regard to indecency; and through the ſerenity of the heavens, they needed no cloaths. In many climates, cloaths are ſtill unneceſſary; and in ſome, a fig-leaf, ſubſtitute of a ſlender

a ſlender covering, is thought ſufficient. Their employment was gardening, happy employment; when labour was little requiſite; nor did the ſweat of the brow prevent agreeable converſe and holy contemplation. Their pleaſures were ſocial endearments, and ſongs of praiſe to the Great Creator, Preſerver. Their religion was thankſgiving. Earth poured forth her bounty, and ſpread her verdant lap before them, their table for refreſhment, their pillow for repoſe. They relied entirely on the heavenly will; and, content with this dependency, were happy. They ought to have ſtudied the nature of it every day; for by obſerving in what it conſiſted, by conſidering the preſent reward it yielded, and the dreadful conſequence of aiming

at

at independence, every foreign aſſault would have been reſiſted as it ought; every inward declenſion of the mind would have been prevented.

I have before ſaid, they were ductile and pliant to right reaſon; but being free to think and act, they were free, from the firſt, to keep to what was good and perfect; or to will ſuch a train of conduct, as would end in their ruin. Hence I aver, that Eve ought not to have liſtened to an angel from Heaven, if he had either perſuaded her to break the command, or even to act contrary to the law of reaſon, given her by God, to govern and direct herſelf. Hence, too, I am bold to ſuppoſe, as in a former Sermonicle, that

that there was a gradual declenſion, by a train of levities, of follies, of greater and greater waywardneſs, which brought on the grand offence.

Whether theſe were ſinful in the idea we uſe the word, is dubious. We read only of ſin entering the world at the fall: but as the fall could not be momentary, ſomewhat prediſpoſing muſt have exiſted before, even as early as thought planned or coveted any thing wrong.

The circumſtances which probably would tend to evil, were health, abundance, and particularly their free agency; each of which might have been enjoyed and exerted, to the great glory of the Creator, and to the

the long, long happineſs of the creature.

Again, though there was a time when moral evil was not in the world, it appears, that at leaſt ſome degree of natural evil, if ſo we may call pain and external misfortunes, did exiſt from the creation of the world.

The poſſibility of introducing the firſt, was owing to the freedom of the will, the imperfection of matter; and afterwards both theſe jointly became the trial and probation of our virtue, our fortitude.

It is not ſaid, that without the fall there would have been no pain; but the curſe appears to be pain encreaſed.

encreaſed. We muſt take things as we find them; and 'tis childiſh or impious, to aſk why they were not made otherwiſe. God is omnipotent, omniſcient too, his power, therefore, always effected what his wiſdom and goodneſs deſigned. Againſt natural evil there was a remedy: but when man forfeited the immediate tuition of Heaven, then the moral world being left to itſelf, and the earth curſed for his ſake, the bulk of pain, diſeaſes, misfortunes, encreaſed without limits. By ſin came death, like a roaring lion, ready to devour.

The words of my text need not be wreſted from their plain obvious ſignification to prove this, *I will multiply thy ſorrow and thy conception.* Pain muſt be felt, before it can be underſtood;

underſtood; and conception would abſolutely be unintelligible, had Eve not conceived before. But if ſhe had conceived before, as we have ſuppoſed, then what the Almighty ſays, with regard to both conception and delivery, would be eaſily underſtood, and make the ſtrongeſt impreſſion.

Some have laboured to ſhew the natural reaſons for the more painful conceiving and delivery of women, than the animals: whilſt others have endeavoured to prove, that in point of make and ſtrength, ſhe has an advantage even over them. It is not for me to decide the theory: but of this I am a capable witneſs, that the ſore travail and labour is undeniable. If God adjudged us to

ſuffer

ſuffer in this particular, he might ordain it in the female economy, and our ſorrows are heightened by our fears. I can call him to witneſs, for in ſpeaking of the miſeries of Jeruſalem, when it ſhould be the firſt time beſieged, his prophet makes uſe of this ſimilitude, "I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, and the anguiſh as of her that bringeth forth her firſt child." I never read this verſe, but my ſpirits flutter, and the dreadful power of anticipation ſiezes my ſoul.

I have thus gone through the circumſtances prior to the expulſion. They were now driven from their delightful abode, and Paradiſe was loſt.——Here then, my ſex, let us

 pauſe.

pauſe. Eve was culpable, God was righteous.

An infidel of the laſt century thus ſarcaſtically exclaimed,—What, was it loſt for one offence? the tempted fair one ſo weak? the tempter ſo ſtrong? for a little apple too? Had the fair matron no guardian angel to preſerve her againſt the wiles of an old crafty fiend?—Such ſtuff is not worth anſwering: it has by ſeveral been anſwered again and again. She voluntarily diſobeyed. What other guard needed ſhe have, than her pleaſing ſituation, her affectionate huſband, converſation with angels, and an expreſs command from the God of nature.

If the whole ſcene, however, from her

her formation, to the moment of her committing the crime, was but that of a few hours, or days, then we can conſider her fault only as next to madneſs: if ſeduced by only one dialogue with a ſpeaking ſnake, then as exceſſive ſtupidity, as weaker than any of her daughters.—But give a little time, to ſupply the brevity of the ſacred hiſterian, a few months, for ſin to hatch, to corrupt, from better to worſe, from levity to folly, to imprudence, to intrigue, to infidelity, to theft, even to the murder in ſome degree of millions on millions, then the narrative is conſiſtent, the higheſt probability of the fact appears upon the foot of common hiſtory. The word of God, as given to us by

his meek and humble ſervant, confirms the whole.

In the ſcale of her weakneſs, I have omitted pride, curioſity, and thoughtleſſneſs. With theſe I know ſhe has been cenſured, perhaps, as I have hinted before, unjuſtly. Pride muſt have ſome inferior ſecretly to triumph over; ſhe had none. Adam was her equal; there was not another.

To pleaſe ourſelves with novelty, is common to our nature. Children admire and covet every thing new: but if they crave what will hurt them, it is through their being ſtangers to the object, and weak of intellect.

In

In curioſity, therefore, the danger lies from our ignorance of what is hurtful. Eve could not plead this: the fruit was planted in the midſt of the garden; ſhe ſaw it daily, and knew that to touch it, to taſte it, was certain death. Our curioſity does not extend thus far. Thoughtleſs, indeed, ſhe might be, at intervals, but ſhe was not certainly ſo when ſhe reaſoned with the ſerpent: 'twas worſe than thoughtleſſneſs.

My ſiſters, I have ſet a great and ſad example before you: I have conſidered it on every ſide. Do you, obſerving her miſtakes, walk through the vale of life cautiouſly. Vigilance is ſtill my theme, and then you will walk ſecurely. Bad as the world is, there is no temptation

 offered

offered us, but what we are able to withſtand, by and with the aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit;—this, if we aſk in prayer, we ſhall attain. It is the love of pleaſure, rather than the love of God and a cloſe attention to his will, which heats our imaginations, and draws us to folly, to guilty indulgences.

The men have far greater temptations than we, from the greater circle of their action, and buſineſs. We have only one thing in reality to guard and preſerve, and that is the heart: keep the heart ſecure by religion, virtue, honour, and all is ſafe. Once polluted, you loſe your brighteſt jewels, your purity, your chaſtity; every vice ruſhes in, and takes poſſeſſion. Keep, therefore,

your

your paſſions moderate, your deſires fixed on the things that are above. God is love, the Redeemer is love, and the Holy Ghoſt is love and peace.—Here, then, love for ever, and with a laudable pride deſpiſe whatever the ruſt can canker, or the worm devour; whatever pleaſes for a moment, or ends in dull ſatiety. That we may all of us thus, &c. *Amen.*

## THE FOURTH.

### GENESIS iii, 16.

*I will greatly multiply thy ſorrow and thy conception: in ſorrow thou ſhalt bring forth children; thy deſire ſhall be to thy huſband, and he ſhall rule over thee.*

I Have hitherto followed our grand parent through ſome intereſting circumſtances, which muſt have taken place during her abode in the bowers of Eden. She and her huſband were driven out of Paradiſe, that they might not, by taſting of the fruit of the tree of life, perpetuate their

their exiſtence in a ſtate of ſin, of labour and ſorrow.

The Rabbis tell us, that Adam, after his expulſion, gave himſelf up, for a long time, to grief and repentance; there can be no doubt that Eve did the ſame. Their wretched change would every hour bring to rembrance what once we were, what now we are.

They were forbidden to look back to the garden, by a flame-like appearance, placed at the entrance. They had made themſelves a covering of leaves in the firſt moments of guilt: God in his mercy now ſhewed them how to make garments of the ſkins of beaſts. Thus decorated, and thus habited, they entered the

the common world, and began their earthly pilgrimage.

A great annaliſt computes this event to have happened in November: I will not ſtay to calculate their climate. To us weſtern nations, this date affords an idea of additional hardſhip.

Was I ſet on ſhore in a deſolate iſland, like the noted Selkirk, I might with my little knowledge, perhaps, be able to preſerve life, for neceſſity is the mother of invention, and difficulties, like gloomy fogs, vaniſh as we enter them: but if it was in the more inclement part of the year, how much would my difficulties be encreaſed! An European female trembles at the very

very thought of ſuch a dreadful ſituation. Diſſolved in luxury and eaſe, bleſſed with every accommodation fancy can imagine, or art provide, ſhe becomes incapable of filling her ſtation as ſhe ought.—She knows not the world, for ſome time at leaſt; nor feels the curſe laid upon the earth; how then would ſhe encounter the horrors I ſuppoſe: and yet, what is this to the ſituation of our mother. I grant you, ſhe had her huſband, I grant you every alleviation you expect from that quarter; but Adam was ignorant too, of the thouſand ills which ſurrounded him; ignorant of the treachery or ferocity of every animal he met with, whoſe natures now were changed like his own; ignorant of all our comforts and conveniences,

veniences, of the nature of foods, of human life, its diſeaſes, its remedies; expoſed to ravenous wild beaſts, and venemous reptiles; to the howling ſtorm, and the rocking foreſt; to innumerable evils and accidents, from which ſociety are more exempt.

It is very probable indeed, that our firſt parents muſt have had ſome inſtructions from Heaven.—A gracious God would not ſuffer them to encounter ſo many evils, as hourly would occur. If they were really ſo deſtitute, as their ſituation ſeemingly rendered them, none of their ſons and daughters were ever ſo uncomfortable, ſo wretched.

This I cannot believe, but pleaſe myſelf

myſelf with thinking, that the benign Creator, who did not ſoon let death take place, ſhewed them their dependence upon him, and by gentle treatment, taught them obedience, as a mean to ſecure them the beſt poſſible ſubſiſtence.

I have dwelt the longer on this, becauſe, removed from the garden, we ſtand upon the ſame ground, and can well conceive their joys, their griefs: we partake of the ſame curſe, which began at the time I am treating of ſo ſtrongly to operate; and, like them, have no happineſs to expect on this ſide the grave; can put no confidence in any thing; have no other reſource than the mercy of God, and the aſſurance of his loving-kindneſs.

Eve

Eve perhaps truſted in her only refuge, and ſaw the Meſſiah riſing in Judea, at a long, long interval of time: to that period I look back, and am thankful for ſalvation, thro' my Saviour, my God.

It is the prevailing opinion, my ſiſters, that our great mother exceeded her daughters in perſonal beauty. This, I apprehend, only ariſes from her being more immediately the work of the Creator.—The idea may be combated. For is the arm of the Almighty ſhortened? Is every thing left to ſecondary cauſes? Has there been a progreſſive degradation? Her daughters cannot believe it. The Deity, for ought that has been alledged to the contrary, may be equally concerned

cerned now, as heretofore, in the formation of our bodies. Had the dames of the patriarchs, the wives of Lamech, the fair Naama and Zilla, more charms than the females of Britain? I judge not, but what is my judgment?

I do believe, however, that Eve was beautiful; for beauty ſeems to me a gracious boon of Heaven. By it we gain the heart of man; we endear ourſelves to him; we encreaſe, we retain his affection.

I have heard that none can reſiſt the prayer of beauty in diſtreſs. It loudly calls for protection, for love. Adam was not inſenſible to the tears of his afflicted partner. He pitied her, and comforted her: love

love and tenderneſs followed; and the conſequence was, what holy ſcripture informs us. Yet, Oh, my ſiſters, how long the interim! Nine ſlow tedious months crept heavily over, before ſhe could with joy exclaim, I have gotten a man from the Lord.

Wretched Eve! thy lot was to be repeatedly miſtaken; no leſs in thy expectation of happineſs from the fruit of thy womb, than from the effects of the fruit of the tree of knowledge.

And thus are we ſhort ſighted creatures perpetually deceived, our hopes and wiſhes fruſtrated.—It muſt be ſo, we are in a ſtrange country, wanderers and ſojourners.

Our grandmother found in the world, juſt what we ſtill find, a few gleams of ſunſhine, the reſt labour and ſorrow, a paſſing away of life, and we are gone.

The curſe, which had changed nature, and even nature's laws, began to affect her with an encreaſed anxiety, to make an alteration, which with us though ordinary, was with her extraordinary.

If, during her former conception, ſhe had often been ſurpriſed with new feelings and ſenſations, ſhe was ſtill more ſo now, when many cauſes conſpired to oppreſs her.

By ſin came death; by ſin came the beginning of diſeaſe, as well as the

the laſt period. The moment we begin to live, we begin to die. Death is not momentary. We confine our ideas to the laſt ſtroke, when really its terrors are no more, are paſt. Every conſtitution has its weakneſs, its defect, its peculiar diſorder; and the diſorder of every part in different perſons, often aſſumes different appearances: hence the variety of human complaints: hence the unnumbered woes which afflict poor woman, and mark her firſt guilty of tranſgreſſion.

Oh, my parent! thy complaints were novel to thee: thou waſt ignorant of diſeaſe, of death, of threatened death, as yet kept back. One thing only thou didſt underſtand, that the hand of God was

heavy on thee, and nature curſed for thy ſake.

There is no doubt but that penitent Eve calmed the tumults of her breaſt with devotion, with reſignation. May we do ſo too! for in the religion of Jeſus, we ſhall find our beſt ſecurity.

The men think themſelves happy in being free from our troubles: 'tis their misfortune to have fewer griefs and pains. Good health and competency give them a greater ſpirit of independency: they know not themſelves: their life is a continued feaſt of pleaſure; and living to pleaſure, they are dead in ſin. Their impatient tempers will not bear the croſs of Chriſt. Their faith

faith is not half ſo ſtrong as ours: their love lukewarm. The reaſon is, the world, its intereſts and pleaſures, abſorb their wiſhes, and conſume their time.

Let me not, however, be uncharitable to the men. May they think more ſeriouſly, and may many of them be found in the reſurrection of the juſt.

Our ſex, it will be retorted, is no leſs fond of pleaſure, than the other. With confuſion of face, I grant it. But though we are often caught by temptation in its varied deluſive forms, often deceived by faithleſs vows, and ſometimes ſeduced by men without principle; nay, though we deceive our own

hearts too frequently, yet are we ſoon brought back to a ſenſe of our duty, by our humiliating ſorrows: we ſee the world in a proper view; we ſee the Creator ſupporting the mighty fabric, and behold ourſelves the works of his hands, the inſtruments of his producing power. It is good for us to be in trouble, we do not often then go wrong.

When qualms of ſickneſs, when irkſome pains, and various portending emotions depreſs our ſpirits, what reliſh for life's enjoyments! Rather betake us to our God, our refuge. If we ſeek the Almighty, we ſhall find comfort and ſupport. If we do not ſeek him, I call Heaven and earth to witneſs, that I believe

believe my ſex the moſt wretched creatures on earth: for we are born into the world, to bear and to ſuffer; to do the will of God, and to abide by his good pleaſure.

Well, then, may we be devout. —For when his terrors are about our beds, when the pains of Hell lay hold upon us, what other reſource? My companion and my friend ſtand by my ſide, my kinſfolk, my neighbours, around me, my huſband not far off; theſe with tender aſſiduity, with every mark of kindneſs, do all for me that can be done: but this how little! Friend, companion, neighbour, kinsfolk, even ſkilful acouchier, what are ye all? All ſpectators of my ſufferings. Your help, your tears, your looks,

perhaps, avail me not. In the dreadful conflict, the wealth and riches of whole India are beneath my notice: the world itſelf, not worth one wiſh. Nothing, nothing but the world's Redeemer can give me peace. Come then, life, my God, if ſuch thy will! or welcome death, thrice welcome to my ſoul!

Oh, my ſiſterhood, have I ſaid too much, or too little? I have done neither; if you now know whom to ſerve, in whom to put your truſt. But here I reſt, with aſcribing to God, &c. *Amen.*

THE

## THE FIFTH.

### GENESIS iii, 16.

*I will greatly multiply thy ſorrow and thy conception: in ſorrow thou ſhalt bring forth children; thy deſire ſhall be to thy huſband, and he ſhall rule over thee.*

EVE ſurvived the ſtruggle; her Maker was merciful.——You read, that ſhe was formed out of the rib, a helpmate for man. The expreſſion implies even pre-eminence; at the leaſt, a companion, a friend, an equal in every reſpect; bone of his bone, fleſh of his fleſh. One

who

who was to ſhare in every employment, every pleaſure of Eden; in contemplating, in admiring, in worſhipping the great Parent and Creator; God bleſſed for ever. Can the warmeſt enthuſiaſm paint more pleaſing ſcenes?

Whether or no there was a formal joining of the firſt pair in marriage, we read not. Her being made on purpoſe for the man, might be enough. The helpmate and the wife, being terms ſignifying the ſame thing. But it may be queried, whether before the fall, ſhe had not more prerogative than what we now retain by our matrimonial contracts?

I can conceive Eve at the firſt,

Adam's

Adam's equal in every thing: and though it ſeems, that he had given names to many things before her day, yet there would be a thouſand others, continually wanting a mark of language, to employ her faculties. I mean to ſay, that Adam had no ſuperiority over Eve, in mind or body. If he had ſtronger powers, ſhe had greater ſoftneſs, and that mild majeſty of manner, which completed the happy union.

Thus let us imagine them to exiſt, until, by ſad neglect, ſhe drew upon herſelf the ſentence of my text.

It is the latter part which now attracts our attention. The one reſpects the man the other the woman.

Thy

*Thy deſire ſhall be to thy huſband, and he ſhall rule over thee.*

The firſt does not immediately appear inimicable. For can a curſe proceed from affection? Did not Eve always deſire the man? Did ſhe not love him? But love was once voluntary; now, ſhe ſhall.—There comes a reſtraint upon the will; 'tis fondneſs by neceſſity; it is no longer tenderneſs; marriage apparently ruled by fate, and the wife the moſt abject of ſlaves.

I muſt be certainly wrong: God is juſt, is righteous: What then means *deſire?* Surely ſome degree of ſenſual paſſion. Human nature was debaſed by the fall.

To

To feel a love, therefore, blended with paſſion, care, anxiety (to uſe the ſcripture expreſſion) was a curſe. Henceforth the will muſt ſtruggle with judgment, and the ſenſes militate with reaſon. Henceforth, affianced to man by fleſh and bone, intereſted in the ſame hopes, fears, averſions; but framed by conſtitution with greater ſenſibility, every nerve was racked at every new event. Nay, the very curſes thundered upon him, rebounded with double violence on her devoted head.—— Her ſentence was perſonal: all her own inflicted ſorrows fell heavy upon her; and yet ſhe had more to ſuffer.

Let us mournfully recollect. Was the ground made more barren on his

his account? Did not this equally affect her? Was he in ſorrow to eat of the ground all the days of his life? Was it not ſo with her? Did not the thorns and thiſtles equally diſtreſs both? Could he eat the herb of the field, and ſhe feed on more delicate viands? Muſt the ſweat run down his brows, and were her delicate limbs free from fatigue? Muſt he return to duſt, and could ſhe, with all her charms, eſcape corruption?

In my former Sermonicles, I have been ſhort in my remarks on the words, *I will greatly multiply thy ſorrow and thy conception.* By learned commentators, I find the original is much ſtronger than the tranſlation. In multiplying I will greatly multiply:

multiply: that is, according to the Hebrew ſtile of ſpeaking, thy ſorrows ſhall be frequent; afflictions meet thee at every turn; and thy conceptions often be attended with pain and miſcarriage.

How affecting! how ſolemn the denunciation! Nor have I yet done.

The paſſions of Eve's ſoul and body were heightened and encreaſed, with love and deſire. She doated on the man from whoſe rib ſhe was extracted; on the man who could not live a ſingle life; for whom it was not good to be alone. In this ſituation, to the loſs of Paradiſe, to all the curſes laid upon her, was added, *And he ſhall rule over thee.*

With

With ſin, entered female ſubjection; from that period, woman is bound to love, to obey.——But no more.

In vain does the condemned convict, when tranſported to another ſhore, look back on the pleaſures which ſhe once enjoyed in her own country. The land is before her, and new circumſtances require new conduct.

Oh that I could here help my ſex! that I could bring one ſiſter more patiently to bear the reſtraints of obedience: that I could unravel the twiſted line of love, duty, pleaſure; that line, which running clear, terminates in life eternal, in eternal happineſs.

Feeble,

Feeble, tis true, is my arm; tho' not impertinent, I truſt, my attempt. For when man addreſſes us, there is cauſe of ſuſpicion. Strength and policy are on his ſide: and how is he accuſtomed to guild the poiſon of his lips!

Let me unfold to my ſiſters the reaſon of *his* miſrule. Suffer me to trace the maze of errors which perplex *her* peace. I have in my boſom, things new and old, which I may produce, to inſtruct the maſter, to direct the handmaid of his will.

Knowledge is no longer confined to monaſtic haunts, nor to academic groves. It ſpreads over the civilized world in ten thouſand ſtreams;

and may it leſſen the crimes of human nature. May preventing grace reſtore us to that eſtate from which our mother fell!

If I am too brief at preſent, the reſt I will add at another opportunity; for impoſſible it is to forget what follows. *And he ſhall rule over thee.*

THE

## THE SIXTH.

GENESIS iii, 16.

*And he ſhall rule over thee.*

THE other day I was reading the following lines in that ſublime poem, Paradiſe Loſt, where the poet makes Adam thus diſcourſe with the angel.

"Well I underſtand in the prime end
Of nature, her the inferior in the mind
And inward faculties which moſt excel.
In outwards alſo, her reſembling leſs
His image who made both."

This is a home ſtroke, indeed,

upon us: it contradicts my whole habit of thinking from infancy. But where did Milton find this ſuperiority of the man? In nature, or in ſcripture? In fallen nature, let us grant it: though many of the learned men have defended our ſex, and proved our equality. In ſcripture did he meet with it? His phanatical genius could wreſt ſcripture ſtrangely; and no wonder that the hand which laboured to overturn regal government, ſhould write what he did on divorce.

A late author has wrote no more in favour of liberty, of polygamy. I am almoſt poſitive, that Milton had in view the principles of that miſchievous treatiſe, when he wrote the lines I have quoted.

Adam,

Adam, I think, could not well underſtand this inferiority, which did not exiſt, till the Heavenly Father denounced it on Eve.

The poet miſtakes ſome expreſſions of St. Paul. That Apoſtle was not ignorant of the time when female ſubjection commenced. He ſpeaks of man's being the image and glory of God, but woman the glory of the man: that the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. And 'tis true, that he would have her keep ſilence in the aſſembly, and learn with all ſubjection.

But do Moſes and St. Paul give different reaſons for female ſubjection? The firſt tells us it was part

of the puniſhment for the grand offence. The ſecond ſays, we muſt be ſubject, becauſe Adam was firſt created, then Eve. The animals were made before either.

This is, therefore, only a reaſon for a decent religious ſubordination, not unlike another. The man is the head of the body, as Chriſt is the head of the Church, or that of St. Peter's.

Wives, be in ſubjection to your huſbands! Why? That idolatrous huſbands might be won by their chriſtian converſation.

Theſe have nothing to do with our reſembling leſs the image of God,

God, than the man, before our tranſgreſſion. And, indeed, once more to quote St. Paul, in winding up his ſentiments: he inſiſts upon mutual complacency; for in ſhort, if the woman is of the man, even ſo is the man by the woman.

I love the candour of this grea Apoſtle: and yet I believe the jewiſh legiſlator. For, in the image of God created he man; male and female created he them. The ſex different, nature the ſame.

Good friends and ſiſters, bear with me in this dry argumentation. But here, as I have cenſured Milton, I muſt with juſtice take notice of his angel's reply to Adam.

" Fair no doubt, and worthy well
Thy cheriſhing and thy love,
Not thy ſubjection. Weigh with her thyſelf,
Then value. "

We may, my ſiſters, accept this, either as a compliment, or as a truth ſuddenly ſtealing from him; and which he was obliged to acknowledge. The latter part ought to be wrote as a phylactery in letters of gold, and tied like a ſcarf, on the arms of our huſbands.

Let the men thus weigh us, and we ſhall make them better helpmates: nay, we will rejoice in their gentle dominion; for it will be the dominion of reaſon, eſtabliſhed in love, and ſoftened by every gentle paſſion which ſways the human heart. Let us frankly own, that woman

was

was firſt in the tranſgreſſion. Her daughters have ſuffered for it.

Come, then, brothers by nature, huſbands by alliance, come ye partners of our tendereſt regards, our pleaſures, and our pains, ſince we are linked together for the good of ſociety, and the mutual diſcharge of a thouſand kind offices; let us meet each other half way.—Do you keep out of ſight the tyrant's brow, the ſurly look, the jealous ſquint, firſt uſed by Satan! Do you forſake all others, and determine to abide with us as long as you live! We will then exert every power to encreaſe the happineſs of your lives: we will joy with your joys, and ſorrow with your ſorrows: we will indeed

indeed *love*, *honour*, and *obey*: we will quit our foibles; and our tempers ſhall harmonize with yours.

I am not daſtardly. What I have ſaid, our religion requires; our happineſs depends upon it. Scripture, reaſon, and experience convince me, that providence brings good out of evil.

I hear the grating ſound, *Man ſhall rule over thee.* Yet from man I derive ſupport, protection, and all the conveniencies of modern life.

I conclude therefore. Are we married? Are our huſbands froward? Why? We are married, too, to Chriſt; and we ought ſecretly

cretly to reſpect the duties of our high vocation.

Remember, I beſeech you, my ſiſters, that if we be obedient on earth, we ſhall enjoy eternal felicity in Heaven. This that we may, &c.

*My*

BRITISH MUSEUM
30
60
JUN

*My Dear Siſter,*

HAVING laboured through ſix diſcourſes, I have given them the name of SERMONICLES; ſtill to keep in view the pre-eminence of man. I am tired, however, of confining my pen to one tract; and if I have failed in the attempt, many of my good brethren have done ſo before me. Few of us can judge of our own abilities: and I muſt confeſs to you, that I have not here pleaſed myſelf. I find there is a knack in every thing, and my ærial car is too light for me to balance properly.

I therefore

I therefore deſcend (from my once ſtationary height, from whence I looked down on God's beſt work of creation) to plain familiar letter writing.

Should I continue my ſcribbling, I would try to explore how we may regain that ſtate of innocence, of love and happineſs, which Eve fatally loſt. Only tell me when I tire you; and write to me ſomething in return, to raiſe my ſpirits this gloomy weather. November fogs are enough to make one melancholy.——I am thinking of—the end of life's drama. Adieu at preſent.*———

*FINIS.*

* This was wrote in 1787, a few months before the death of the Authoreſs.